

# COVID-19 Essentials: Gowns

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **Q: What are your inventory levels and how are you managing on-going?**

A: Since the beginning of the COVID crisis, we have been in close contact with senior living providers and other customers to understand their current volume and future needs for gowns. We have more than enough inventory on-hand to meet the immediate need for product availability and will be receiving on-going inventory from our factories to ensure that we do not run out of stock.

If you or your organization is interested in increasing access to gowns ongoing, please contact your dedicated account manager, corporate account manager or call 800-634-7328 to discuss further.

### **Q: What are the categories of gowns?**

A: There are two main categories of gowns intended for medical purposes, surgical and non-surgical.

A surgical gown is a personal protective garment intended to be worn by health care personnel during surgical procedures to protect both the patient and health care personnel from the transfer of microorganisms, body fluids, and particulate matter.

Non-surgical gowns are Class I devices (exempt from premarket review) intended to protect the wearer from the transfer of microorganisms and body fluids in low or minimal risk patient isolation situations. Non-surgical gowns are not worn during surgical procedures, invasive procedures, or when there is a medium to high risk of contamination.

### **Q: What is the ANSI/AAMI standard for liquid barrier?**

A: The FDA recognizes American National Standards Institute/Association of the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (ANSI/AAMI) PB70:2003, "Liquid barrier performance and classification of protective apparel and drapes intended for use in health care facilities."

There are four levels under the standard:

- Level 1: *Minimal risk*, to be used, for example, during basic care, standard isolation, cover gown for visitors, or in a standard medical unit
- Level 2: *Low risk*, to be used, for example, during blood draw, suturing, in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), or a pathology lab
- Level 3: *Moderate risk*, to be used, for example, during arterial blood draw, inserting an Intravenous (IV) line, in the Emergency Room, or for trauma cases
- Level 4: *High risk*, to be used, for example, during long, fluid intense procedures, surgery, when pathogen resistance is needed or infectious diseases are suspected (non-airborne)

### **Q: What is your testing criteria?**

A: For AAMI rated gowns, the gowns are tested by independent third parties to validate their level of liquid barrier protection .

### **Q:What is the most important criterion when choosing a gown?**

A: Per the FDA, gowns should first and foremost be chosen based on the desired application. Because no set standards exist in the naming of gowns (i.e., isolation gowns, procedure gowns, etc.), a gown should be chosen based on its intended use, while still factoring in the desired level of protection that is needed. This information should be available on the gown's label or packaging.

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### **Q:What else should be considered when purchasing gowns?**

A:

#### Donning and Doffing

The manner in which the clothing is donned and doffed in sequence is critical. The ease or difficulty with which PPE is put on and removed may affect its effectiveness and the potential for self-contamination, especially during doffing of contaminated PPE.

Gowns *with* Tape Tab, Tie, Hook and Loop, Over-the-head neck closures make for easier donning and doffing. Gowns featuring Hook and Loop neck closures are manufactured for easy adjustability, and Tape Tab neck closures are for ease and reduce the time for donning and doffing. Gowns featuring a Hook and Loop style neck closure allow the neckline to easily adjust to variety of sizes

In order to eliminate the strike-through through the cuffs, gloving over the cuff is recommended. However this may not provide adequate protection depending on the task performed and amount of blood involved. One of the latest solutions to keep the gown wrist in place is thumb loops.

If you are unsure of how to don and doff our gowns, please contact your dedicated account manager, corporate account manager or call 800-634-7328 for instructions provided from the manufacturer

#### Sizing and Fit:

In the marketplace, different size options (small, medium, etc.) are offered in addition to universal sizing (one size fits most). It has been determined that the universal size sometimes does not adequately fit the workers. The gowns must allow adequate freedom for HCWs to move and are easy to put on and remove without contaminating the worker or the workplace. Poorly fitted garments may cause blood or bacteria to easily reach the skin or other clothing. CDC recommends that several gown sizes should be available in a healthcare facility to ensure appropriate coverage for staff members.

Ties on the abdomen or torso are a common feature used for isolation gowns and need to be tied properly to prevent hazards and exposure.

### **Q: Why do some Gowns not have an AAMI rating level?**

A: These gowns may offer protection in very minimal to no fluid settings. This is sometimes due to the design of the gown and its coverage area. Follow local, state and federal (OSHA, CDC, FDA) guidance to determine when a gown that is not AAMI rated may be appropriate to use.

### **Q: What are washing instructions for reusable polyester gowns?**

A: Polyester isolation gowns must be laundered prior to use. They should be laundered separate from other linen to minimize lint accumulation and maximize the economics of the lightweight synthetic fabric. The number of laundering/drying cycles is suggested by the manufacturer.

Thorough rinsing is essential to properly remove all surfactants. Residual surfactants act to reduce the repellent characteristics of polyester isolation gowns.

Manufacturer recommended wash formulas and dry cycles can be obtained by contacting your dedicated account manager, corporate account manager or calling 800-634-7328 to discuss further

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### **Q: Are there any limits to how many disposable gowns I can buy?**

A: So that we can ensure that we have enough inventory on-hand, there are currently weekly limits in place:

0-8VD11 - Temporarily limited to 300 gowns or fewer per week, per facility.

0-8XB55 - Temporarily limited to 300 gowns or fewer per week, per facility.

If your Corporation is interested in removing order maximum limitations of gowns, please contact your dedicated Corporate Account Manager to discuss further.